

131. I suppose they could not do that without expense?—No, the expense has to be incurred by somebody. It would be cheaper to ask us to perform the service and pay us for it.

132. Do you know precisely what happens at Wanganui?—No, I do not; but I know that we are performing the services there, and I know we are performing them at the present time at a loss. The charge was fixed some time ago, before the wages were raised to the present rate.

133. Mr. Weston also asked you something about Wellington. Just look at your rates with regard to port traffic at Wellington Station. Do you see that your charge on A, B, C, D, and E goods for haulage between the ship's side and the railway-sheds, including weighing and handling, per ton, whether weight or measurement, is 2s. 3d.?—Yes, that is so.

134. *The Chairman.*] I suppose the shed on the wharf at Foxton now has not been built specially for dealing with goods coming or going by ships?—It is a general shed.

135. And possibly it is not in the best position for dealing with the cargoes of ships?—We have shown by the way we have been dealing with it that it is generally convenient.

JOHN MASSY DECK sworn and examined. (No. 51.)

1. *Mr. Weston.*] I think you are shipping manager for Messrs. W. and G. Turnbull and Co.?—Yes.

2. Who are agents for the Anchor Line here?—Yes.

3. Can you say, with reference to your boats, what has been your attitude towards the Foxton Harbour in recent years?—We have found it increasingly difficult to work.

4. Are the boats which you are sending there now smaller than those you sent in the past?—Yes. We used to send the "Alexander" there: she carried 280 tons of coal; but we would not think of sending her there now.

5. What boats do you send?—The "Kennedy" and the "Waverley"; but we have just disposed of the "Waverley."

6. She was going there last year on your behalf?—Yes.

7. What sort of luck has the "Kennedy" had this year?—We have had to take in smaller loads with her. We have not been able to fill her. We had a very lively experience there during the last spring tides. She took in only 140 tons, but she stuck for twenty minutes on the bar. The captain told me he thought she was going to stop there, but she just managed to come off. Very frequently the trouble is in the river.

8. On the whole, is there more trouble there than on the bar?—Well, it is more frequent. If the bar is bad we do not risk it, but in the river you have to pay for lightering. The "Alexander" went in and out some years ago on the same tide and put off a load of sheep.

9. That would be a light load?—Yes, she would not draw a great deal of water with that. We would not send the "Alexander" in there at all now. It shows that she had to cross the bar about half-tide to have the time to do it in.

10. *Mr. Myers.*] What trade is the "Alexander" in?—Nelson, Wanganui, New Plymouth, Onehunga, Westport, and Wellington.

11. Does the "Alexander" take goods to Wanganui for the inland towns?—Yes.

12. From Wellington?—No, from the West Coast and Nelson.

13. I suppose the freight from Wanganui and Foxton would be about the same?—No; that is, coal and cement. Foxton is higher than Wanganui on account of the disadvantages at Foxton. The difference has been increasing all the time. They used to be level rates.

14. What is the freight from Wellington to Wanganui?—I am not in that trade, but I understand it is 14s. now.

15. Do you know what it is from here to Foxton?—No; I am not in that trade.

16. We had it in evidence that it is 9s. for goods beyond Foxton and 12s. 6d. for goods to Foxton, so that is less than to Wanganui?—Yes, that is so.

17. *The Chairman.*] Your ships do not go from Wellington but from Nelson?—Yes. We used to take in large quantities of coal to Foxton for the Railway Department, and we also took in cement.

18. You do not take coal to Foxton for the Department now?—Yes; but very seldom on account of the bar and the river being so unsatisfactory. There is always a danger when taking cargoes to Foxton.

19. *Mr. Myers.*] Did the Government tell you that was the reason—on account of the difficulties at Foxton?—There is always the difficulty when loading for Foxton that you may get "neaped."

20. You take coal to Wanganui, too, do you?—Yes, all round the west coast.

ALFRED KINGSLEY DREW sworn and examined. (No. 52.)

1. *Mr. Skerrett.*] The freights and fares chargeable upon your tramway are regulated by Order in Council?—Yes.

2. Please give the date of the Order in Council?—It was gazetted on the 18th July, 1884.

3. And readopted and amended by Order in Council in 1901?—Yes.

4. Mr. MeVilly has complained that the tariff obtaining on your tramway differs materially from the tariff obtaining on the Government line: is that so?—No. Class A in our tariff is exactly the same as the Government, Class B is exactly the same, Class C is exactly the same, and also Class D is exactly the same. Class E, for grain, exceeds the Government charge. Class F is exactly the same. Class H, for wool, exceeds the Government charge. Class K is the same, but Class M exceeds the